

6 *from the Author*

OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

OBJECTIONS

MADE TO THE

EXPORT OF WOOL

FROM

GREAT BRITAIN

TO

IRELAND.

BY

JOHN, LORD SHEFFIELD.

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OBSERVATIONS,

&c.

I HAVE, at different periods, considered the state of the manufactures of Great Britain, conceiving they are worthy great attention; and I have always been a hearty well-wisher to the success of the woollen manufacture, especially to that of Yorkshire, in favour of which I am likely, from circumstances, to entertain a prejudice, but against which I certainly can feel none. I have also considered the growth and qualities of wool in different parts of the world, and I have visited some of the principal manufactories abroad. During upwards of thirty years I have had experience
in

in the growth of wool. Having also, at different periods, considered the state of Ireland, her manufactures and trade, and having some knowledge of the relative and comparative situation of that country and Great Britain, I presume to offer an opinion on a very interesting subject, arising out of the Union. I intended to have done this in the Committee; but the length of some speeches, and the impatience which was shewn for the question, prevented me: besides which, the able and comprehensive speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in answer to Mr. Wilberforce, seemed to make what I intended to offer, at that time, and in that place, unnecessary.

Perhaps, however, what I proposed to have said in Parliament, where the subject was not familiar to many, will be better submitted in this shape to the consideration of the Public at large; particularly to the manufacturers—a class of men with whom I have had much intercourse, for whom I entertain the highest respect, and whom I have always found well disposed

disposed to hear dispassionate reason, even on subjects where their interests were most concerned. These gentlemen may be assured, that my zeal for the manufactures of this kingdom, their own included, is not inferior to that of the respectable member* who so warmly espoused their cause in the House of Commons, and who seemed to have persuaded himself, that on the decision of the question depended almost the ruin or salvation of this country. Their Counsel did not neglect to urge, and with great ability, every thing that had been suggested to them on the deservedly popular subject of the woollen manufacture; and of course did not omit to render it interesting, by declaring that the Nation must be ruined if their cause should not succeed. In what I shall hereafter state, I have particularly adverted to petitions presented to the House of Commons, and to evidence lately given before the Committee of that House, much of which appears to me questionable, with respect to

* Mr. Wilberforce.

to many of the facts advanced, as well as with regard to the reasonings of those persons who have argued in relation to those facts.

The petitioners and their advocates assert, if the exportation of British wool should be allowed, Ireland will rival England in the manufacture of her own wool, whilst Ireland on her part claims the continuance of protecting duties for her own woollen manufactures against the British. They also assert, that the growth of wool in Great Britain is not sufficient to supply the manufactures; and that, in case British wool should be permitted to be exported, great quantities would be conveyed to foreign countries, under pretence of carrying it to Ireland.

Although the ablest of our Writers have argued in favour of a free trade in wool, I am glad that it is not necessary to enter upon that delicate subject, relative to which we do not always allow ourselves to reason freely. To me, I confess, the question seems to amount
to

to no more than this—Whether or no, until a complete arrangement of Excise and Customs can take place between Great Britain and Ireland, the wool of this country shall for a time be exportable to Ireland, the utmost possible inconvenience of which would be to raise a little, during such limited time, the price of the coarser wools? But, in truth, I conceive the material question is, Whether wool shall go from England to Ireland, when the two countries are incorporated? For I have heard our liberal manufacturers acknowledge, that in case of an Union there ought to be a free intercourse, but that there should be no protecting duties against the woollen manufacture of England, while the linen manufacture of Ireland enters duty free. I shall not attempt to defend these protecting duties, that are to take place, until the arrangement can be completed;—far less shall I attempt to justify the commercial policy of Ireland in requiring them. In the first place, they will act as a tax on the people of Ireland; and the experience of a century has proved, that, under the operation
of

of such duties, the import of English woollens into Ireland has not been checked, the average of nine years, ending 1798* inclusive, being 425,676l. in value: But, above all, it appears to me, that the introduction of this system, which establishes the same protecting duties in woollens imported from Ireland, will counteract one of her main objects, namely, the introduction of English manufacturers and capitals; for, were I manufacturer, I certainly should not settle in Ireland during the existence of a system that would exclude me from the market of Great Britain, which, in every other instance, Ireland has found the best, and through which almost the whole of her commerce is carried on. I should wish, even if it were only for the sake of appearance, that there should not seem to be any want of reciprocity between the two countries.—Perhaps it was not worth while to furnish fuel that would

* I have not included the year 1799, as the import was extraordinary, in consequence of the Rebellion and the large Army then in Ireland.

would inflame apprehensions in Ireland; but, fairly considered, it is only a temporary expedient, a temporary gratification to the Irish, which is to exist for a period much too short to produce any material disadvantage to the woollen manufacture of England, so firmly and so well established that all countries apprehend the ruin of their own manufacture, if English woollens, charged as they are with duties, be admitted into them*.

The objection made, in this country, to the export of wool to Ireland, comes principally from the woollen manufacturers of the North: But, before I observe on their apprehensions, it

* It is difficult to average the value of English woollens imported into Ireland; but the duty certainly is not ten *per cent.* on the whole, and there will be no duty on the import of British carpeting, blankets, and certain coarse woollens. The value of woollens imported into Ireland from Great Britain, average of three years ending January 1799, 686,759*l.* Duty paid in Ireland, on same average, 42,499*l.* Consequently the true average duty is about six *per cent.*

it may be proper to examine what are the expectations of benefit entertained in Ireland if wool should be exportable from hence to that country. The evidence printed by order of the Irish House of Commons, seems to mark the prevailing opinion in Ireland on that point. The whole of that evidence shall be fairly given, together with extracts from two speeches of Mr. Foster, Speaker of the Irish House of Commons, and of Mr. Beresford, who has long presided over the Excise and Customs in Ireland: Both these Gentlemen are known and acknowledged to be men of great ability, than whom none are better informed on all subjects which concern the trade and interest of their country.

Extracts from the Evidence of Mr. PIM, reputed to be a very intelligent and well-informed man.

“Mr. JOSHUA PIM, *examined*—Says he has taken notice of the article allowing the importation of wool: Cannot but consider there is some advantage in Ireland getting the importation

tation of any article which she had not before; but does not see any reason to expect that English wool can be brought into this country, and manufactured here, with any advantage to this country; can, however, speak only as to probability: There was formerly great difference in the prices of wool in England and Ireland—they were much cheaper in England than in Ireland; understands they are now nearly equal: It was then a great object to the Irish manufacturer to get share of the English wool, at a time there was a great disparity in the prices: Understands that disparity does not now exist; wool being a very bulky article, it must be of very expensive conveyance: Does not apprehend the opposite coast of England to be a wool country; of course the expence of carriage must be great: Recollects, several years ago, making an attempt to send wool from Dublin to Cork by sea; the expence was so great, he desisted, and continued to send by land-carriage: Apprehends Ireland to be mostly deficient in the fine wool for clothing; but for any thing of an export manufacture, she is
deficient

deficient in every respect: Spanish wool is imported on as good terms as English; but, from circumstances, it cannot be had so cheap: Ireland is very deficient in the manufacture that is composed chiefly or wholly of Spanish wool; that manufacture has declined greatly within some years: Apprehends that Ireland would not import much of the fine British wool, from the high price of it, for the fine manufacture, at the prices for two or three years back; thinks it must come quite too dear for the coarse manufacture: The export of bay yarn has decreased, these last few years, almost to nothing; in Ireland it is mostly wrought up in stuffs and serges; in England it is wrought up in other articles, and in stuffs and serges also: there is not a constant demand from England; there is at present a demand; witness had application for some this day: He is not intimately acquainted with the making of carpets; understands that it is the coarse combing wool that is used; coarse coverlets and blankets could be made of the coarse wool: Does not think it likely that any English

lish manufacturer will come over here, and settle his capital in the woollen business; he could employ it better at home: The import of woollen cloths has increased in this country prodigiously; there is a duty *per yard*, which is very trifling on fine cloths: The increase of import has taken place chiefly there; considers the increase of import a proof that the English manufacturer can make fine woollen cloth cheaper than can be made here: Conceives a greater quantity of cotton wool comes through England than comes direct; he speaks from observation, not from knowledge: coals are very material to the woollen manufacture, but not so much as to other manufactures: It is pretty clear that Yorkshire must possess many advantages, as to the woollen, over other parts of England; never was in Yorkshire, but understands that there are collieries there: In the clothing branch, they spin and card the wool by machinery; has heard of their sheering the pieces by machinery: there are a good deal of machinery in the woollen manufacture in Ireland: Hears in Middleton, and knows that

that in Dublin, and in other places, some are turned by water, and a good deal in Dublin turned by horses; in the woollen trade, the spinning is done by hand-machines in Ireland."

Mr. Foster, in his printed speech of the 17th February last, says,

"The free import of wool from Britain, which the propositions allow, is cried up as a great sacrifice made by Britain, and a great gain to us. I acknowledge its liberality, and that it was not included in the commercial propositions of 1785; at the same time I cannot see its particular beneficial effects. Our great import of woollen manufacture consists chiefly of the finer cloths, in which Spanish wool is solely or principally used: we cannot expect any, or at least very little wool fit for them from Britain; and I apprehend the freight on it would be much higher on account of its bulk than $5\frac{1}{2}$ *per cent.* which the Noble Lord states to be the general charge on all articles from Britain to Ireland: its freight is so expensive, that I am well informed an attempt to send it from Dublin to Cork coast-

coastways was abandoned, and it was sent by land: Spanish wool is as free to us without duty, as to Britain; yet we manufacture a very small part of our consumption of superfine clothing.

“ If the coarser wool should come, which might be principally used in carpeting, you will recollect that these same propositions take off the present protecting duties of 12l. 14s. 1d. *per cent.* If wool in Britain should again fall to the low price it used to be at, compared with our's, we might possibly import; the consequence would be lowering the price of our own, which, however beneficial to the clothier or carpet-maker, might not be relished well by the grazier; but the whole of it promises to be so trifling, that it is not worth further observation.”

Mr. Foster, in another speech of the 19th March last, says,

“ As to old Drapery—our import of it has increased exceedingly; *sc.* from an average of 690,737 yards in the first five years, to one of

1,027,404

1,027,404 on the last five ending 1799; and even in the year 1799, the import was 1,269,857, exceeding the average a fifth. It is evident, therefore, that our supply of this manufacture from Britain has risen most rapidly; and as there is to be no change of duty on it, the British raw wool is offered to us duty-free to check its increase. I shewed you, formerly, how ineffectual the offer must be for extending the manufacture here; but the Right Honourable Gentleman tells us, that, notwithstanding its great bulk, the freight of it will not be expensive, because smugglers carry it. He cannot mean from England hither; there is no such practice; and if he means from either country to France, I shall doubt the fact. Let me, however, remind him, that while one pack of British wool serves to work up two of French, it is worth the Frenchman's while to pay excessive freight for it."

Mr. Beresford, in his speech of the 27th of March last, says,

"Does any man really believe that the use
of

of British wool can be of no advantage to the wool-comber, the spinner of wool, the weaver, and the whole manufacture of woollens? Is it not a well-known fact, that although wool was cheaper in England than in Ireland, yet that our yarn was much cheaper in Britain than they could spin it for, owing to our labour being so much lower than theirs. If, then, we get nothing but the spinning of the wool, we should be considerable gainers, the value of yarn being one-third of the value of the manufacture."

Mr. Foster, and also Mr. Pim, appear to under-rate the advantage of importing wool from England. I agree with Mr. Beresford, that Ireland may derive considerable advantage from the circumstance, and without prejudice to Great Britain, as she may extend those manufactures for which she has a demand, and in which she excels; but it can only be when the price of wool is low in England: and I assert, that whenever the demand shall raise the price in this country to any thing like its true value, Ireland cannot afford to pay it; that rise

would immediately check the demand from Ireland, and she will never be able to import British wool at near so low a price as the British manufacturer may always have that article. The permission to import wool from hence may prevent its becoming a drug in this country, and may also prevent its deterioration. It tends to encourage a good quality of wool, because it will promote a steady, reasonable price: but no more of it can go to Ireland than what our manufacturers do not want. The export will be regulated by the price; and surely our manufacturers, protected by machinery, which goes far in equalizing the price of labour*, and many other advantages, cannot dread a manufacture *in Ireland*, made of British wool, charged with the expence of carriage, freight, insurance, commission, &c. Few countries become industrious until the expence of living has rendered constant labour necessary. The increase of manufactures will increase

* Mr. Joseph Stancliffe, in his evidence, the first of May 1800, states the saving of labour by the introduction of machinery as $77\frac{1}{3}$ to 160.

crease that expence and the price of labour in Ireland; where skill is required, wages are higher in Ireland than in England.

Ireland has, and has had at different periods, a considerable woollen manufacture. The despotic Act of 1699, dictated by the same policy which gave the monopoly of wool to the manufacturer against the wool-grower and consumer in England, prohibited Ireland from exporting woollens or wool—of course promoted the smuggling great quantities of wool from thence. It was for the advantage of the woollen manufacture of England, that woollen and worsted yarn were permitted to be sent from Ireland to England: This permission raised the value of wool in Ireland, greatly reduced the smuggling of that article, and, since the prohibition to export woollens has been repealed, that practice has entirely ceased; Ireland works up almost the whole of the wool she grows, as is proved by her having exported lately very little wool, or woollen or worsted yarn.

The following Statement, taken from Observations

vations which I published in 1785*, will more fully shew what the Irish woollen manufacture has been and is likely to be :

Some manufactures of wool† existed in Ireland previous to the reign of James the First, but they were not considerable: They then made some progress, and in the succeeding reign, although Lord Strafford discouraged them. The civil war which followed, almost annihilated every manufacture in Ireland; and that country, which had so abounded in cattle and provisions, was, after Cromwell's *settlement* of it, obliged to import provisions from Wales‡. However, it was sufficiently recovered, soon after the Restoration, to alarm the grazing counties of England; and in the 1666, the import-

* Observations ou the Manufactures, Trade, and present State of Ireland.

† ~~woollen, coarse, and fine, were made in Ireland in 1600, especially in Ulster~~

‡ Sir William Perry states the cattle and stock of Ireland to be worth above four millions in 1641, and that the whole cattle in Ireland was not worth 500,000*l.* in 1652.

importation of live cattle, sheep, swine, &c. from Ireland, was prohibited. The principle of the Bill was bad; but it proved a beneficial law for Ireland. It was represented, that the rents of England had fallen one fifth, through the public *nuisance*, as it was termed, of importing cattle from Ireland; although the value of those imported in 1667, the year previous to the law, was not above 132,000*l.*:—The hides, tallow, and freight, were worth half that sum. Observe the effect of the narrow views and mistaken policy of England—Before that time, great numbers of young cattle were sent to England; little butter, scarce any beef, hides or tallow, were exported; and the money received for the cattle was paid for English commodities. The attention of Ireland was by that restraint turned to sheep, to the dairy and fattening of cattle, and to tillage; and she shortly exported much beef and butter, and has since supplanted England in those beneficial branches of trade. She was forced to seek a foreign market; and England had no more than a fourth of her trade,

trade, although before that time she had almost the whole of it. The woollen manufacture of Ireland*, towards the end of that century, began to recover; and England (not content with her extraordinary experiment in respect to cattle) immediately supposed her own manufacture ruined; and a narrow spirit, which was more excusable in the manufacturers because they seemed in a degree interested, induced the Legislature to pass an Act in 1699, prohibiting the exportation of woollen manufactures

* A Report of the Board of Trade, made in the year 1697, gives the following account of the Irish Woollen Manufactures exported :

YEARS.	HATS.	DRAPERY.		FRIZE.	RUGS.	STOCK-INGS.
		New	Old.			
		Pieces.	Pieces.			
	No.	Pieces.	Pieces.	Yards.	No.	Dozen.
1665		224	32	444,381	455	1,839 $\frac{3}{4}$
1684	336	3,867	34	562,805		2,724
1687		11,360	103	1,129,716		4,201 $\frac{1}{2}$
1690		247 $\frac{1}{2}$	11 $\frac{1}{2}$	101,419	3	820
1691	31	1,470 $\frac{1}{2}$	50 $\frac{1}{2}$	150,692	5	1,641
1692		1,500	62 $\frac{1}{2}$	62,771 $\frac{1}{2}$		1,618
1693	381	2,726 $\frac{3}{4}$	23 $\frac{1}{2}$	34,681	53	810 $\frac{3}{4}$
1694	727	2,912	28 $\frac{1}{4}$	20,839 $\frac{1}{2}$	24	2,370 $\frac{3}{4}$
1695	718	2,608	17 $\frac{1}{4}$	41,146	19	1,251
1696	1,547	4,413	34 $\frac{3}{4}$	104,167	144	2,919

factures from Ireland to any other places but the few wool ports in England, where they were liable to duties which amounted to a prohibition.

And observe, again, the mistake of England—The woollen manufacturers of Ireland, who, or their ancestors, came chiefly from England, now emigrated from Ireland*; certainly, however, in smaller numbers than were at the time represented. In their resentment and necessities, many of the Protestants moved to Germany, many of the Roman Catholics to Spain, and others of each description to France, where they received encouragement, and shewed the means of smuggling wool to the Continent

* About the year 1664, some clothiers from the West of England settled in Dublin, and established the manufacture which still continues there. It is said, nearly at the same time, sixty Dutch families of clothiers settled at Limerick. Some English clothiers settled also at Cork and Kinsale. Some French introduced the drugget manufacture at Waterford; and, in 1675, some London Merchants set up a woollen manufacture at Clonmell.

ment from both Islands. The foundation of manufactures were laid, or they were promoted, highly to the prejudice of England; and thus some return was made for the manufactures established in the British dominions by the equally unwise Edict of Nantz.

But the account of the woollen manufactures exported from Ireland in 1698, the year preceding the prohibition, will best shew the wantonness of that oppressive measure :

	<i>England.</i>	<i>Scotland.</i>	<i>Elsewhere.</i>
Apparel..... value	£.102:3:4.....	£.517:19	
Drapery {	new, pieces	601..2128..	20556 $\frac{1}{2}$
	old, pieces	1 $\frac{1}{4}$.. 29 $\frac{3}{4}$	250 $\frac{1}{2}$
Frize.....yards	127,601..	1355..	537945
Hats.....number ..	479..	1125.....	2866
Rugs..... do.....	30.....	10.....	418
Stockings {	wol. doz.pr.	745.....	5..... 7002
	wor. do.	16:9.....	158:8

For the better understanding of this account,
it is necessary to know, that the article the
amount

amount of which is most considerable, namely frizes*, was not made in England. That the frizes and stockings exported the preceding year, 1697, together, amounted to 14,625*l.* 12*s.* † and the old and new drapery, which alone interfered with the English manufacture, amounted only to 8988*l.* 17*s.* 6*d.* ‡ In 1698, 13,480 stones of yarn, and 217,678 stones of wool were sent to England, which was 9812 stones of yarn more than in 1687, the year of greatest export; and 38,913 stones of wool less. In the above mentioned year of the greatest export, viz. 1687, the

* Frize was the principal woollen manufacture of Ireland, when her wool was much finer than it is now; and had been established very early there: we find it the object of a law in 1376, the last year of Edward the Third. The larger part of the frizes that came to England were dressed, and, receiving a considerable degree of manufacture, afforded a profit to this country. The export of frizes is now inconsiderable, but the increased population has probably increased the home consumption.

† This calculation is taken from J. Smith, on wool: it appears very low.

‡ Total of woollen manufactures exported that year, 23,614*l.* 9*s.* 6*d.* Accounting the wool to be one-fourth, the value of the labour was about 18,000*l.*

the value of all the woollen manufactures exported did not exceed 70,521*l.* 14*s.* and of that sum the frizes amounted to 56,485*l.* 16*s.* coarse stockings, 2520*l.* 18*s.* : Old and new draperies did not exceed 11,514*l.* 10*s.* It appears from the Custom-house accounts, that Ireland had not recovered above one third of the woollen trade she had before the war of the Revolution; and it is remarkable that, in the above year 1687, she sent more wool and yarn to England than in any of the preceding years, viz. of yarn, at 18*lbs.* to the stone, 3668 stones; of wool, 256,592 stones.

England did not foresee an obvious consequence of prohibiting the exportation of woollens from Ireland, namely, that it would lead her to manufacture her wool into a great variety of articles for her own consumption, and reduce her import of English manufactures: whereas the frizes, the then principal manufacture of Ireland, and the principal article of Irish export, did not interfere with any branch of British woollens.

The import from England was lessened accordingly, although not for the years immediately following.

Imported into Ireland from Great Britain.

* Old Drapery.		Value.		New Drapery.		Value.	
Years.	Yards.	£.	s. d.	Yards.	£.	s. d.	
1700...	12,192...	9,014	12.6 ..	24,522...	2,048	10.0	
1706....	5,514 $\frac{1}{2}$...	4,135	17.6 ..	15,308 $\frac{1}{2}$...	1,913	11.3	
1729...	23,412 $\frac{1}{2}$...	18,309	3.0 ..	35,905...	3,590	10.0	
1737....	9,626 $\frac{1}{2}$...	6,497	17.9 ..	17,569 $\frac{1}{2}$...	2,635	8.0	
1740...	16,714.....			39,064.....			
1741...	12,918.....			42,504.....			
1742...	22,971.....			53,364.....			
1743...	14,582.....			65,880.....			
1777...	381,330...	266,931	0.0 ..	731,819 $\frac{1}{2}$...	91,477	8.4	
1779...	176,196.....			270,839.....			
1780...	64,346.....			159,428.....			
1781...	326,575.....			433,198.....			
1782...	362,824.....			547,336.....			
1783...	371,871.....			420,415.....			

Exported

* Old drapery means that cloth which has undergone the operation of the fulling mill. By new drapery is meant generally manufactured worsteds or stuffs.

Exported from Ireland to Great Britain.

<i>Years.</i>	<i>Wool, Stones of 18lb.</i>	<i>Wool. & worst. yarn. Stones.</i>
1687.....	178,766.....	3,668
1698.....	256,591.....	13,480
1700.....	336,292.....	26,617
1714.....	147,153.....	58,147
1729.....	38,667.....	91,854
Average of 5 years		
ending March		
25, 1766	25,284.....	160,295
Average of 5 years		
ending March		
25, 1783.....	2,435.....	84,255

	<i>Wool.</i>	<i>Woollen yarn.</i>	<i>Worsted yarn.</i>
1797	88.....	3.....	15,062
1798	89.....	nil.....	12,192
1799.....	226.....	nil.....	5,250

The prohibition having promoted the smuggling of wool, the peace of Utrecht rendered that practice more easy; the intercourse with France was greater; and in the year 1714, the quantity of wool imported into England from Ireland, which in 1700 was 336,292 stones, was reduced to 147,153 stones. The quantity of woollen yarn imported into England from
Ireland

Ireland had increased from 26,617 stones in 1700, to 91,854 stones in 1729, the year previous to the alteration of the duty on export from Ireland. The duties were entirely taken off* in England, by the 12th and 26th George the Second, from woollen and worsted yarn imported from Ireland. To which (the increased demand for worsted yarn from Manchester, and the circumstance that spinning is much cheaper in Ireland than in England, being added) the increased export of yarn from Ireland may be imputed. The value of wool was raised very considerably above the price in England,

* But this was not proposed in favour of Ireland. It was not much better than a job in favour of the English manufacturers, whose interest it was not to diminish the quantity of Irish wool, though their wish was totally to destroy the Irish manufacture, and (notwithstanding the monopoly was already given to them of English wool) it was thought *reasonable* that the wool growers of England should submit to this additional depreciation of that article. This law, however, tended to lessen the smuggling of wool from Ireland to foreign countries, at the same time that it lowered the price (already too low) in England.

England, by the demands of the merchant, who was enabled to give an extraordinary price, being reimbursed through the low price of spinning. Smuggling of wool, of course, decreased, and has for some years ceased: And here it may be remarked, that the depreciation of wool in any country, below its natural value, by prohibitions or monopolies, encourages smuggling more than the particular want of it in other countries.

Since the year 1768, the export of wool and woollen and worsted yarn has decreased very much, principally from the increase of the woollen manufacture in Ireland, the increase of the people, and consequently increased home consumption; and some have supposed that the corn bounties and increase of tillage had diminished the number of sheep. It appears, that the importation of draperies decreased between the years 1729 and 1737, to less than half; for which it is not easy to account, unless by the impoverishment and distress arising from the scarcity of corn in the
years

years 1728 and 1729*. From 1743 the importation began to increase, and rapidly and progressively, till the great import took place in 1777, and then, in consequence of non-importation agreements and other circumstances, the importations suddenly and greatly fell; but in the following years, the importation of old drapery rose above the average of former years, and amends were made for non-importations: A similar result had taken place in America on like occasions.

Value of the woollen manufactures exported from Great Britain to Ireland, in the last ten years :

1790.....	£.394,720..	7..	8
1791.....	499,793..	16..	8
1792.....	490,271..	16..	3
1793.....	178,071..	11..	5
1794.....	308,759..	16..	6
1795.....	458,938..	3..	10
1796.....	555,963..	10..	6

1797

* Corn had been imported, in eighteen months, to the amount of 274,000*l.*; a vast sum at that time, considering the state of the country.

1797.....	£.360,600..	3..10
1798.....	583,964..	14.. 0
1799.....	916,190..	4.. 6

The extraordinary increase in the year ending the 25th day of March 1799, was probably occasioned by the distress of the country, in consequence of the rebellion, and the necessity of sending clothing to the great military force then in Ireland.

In the year 1800, the value of the woollen manufactures of Great Britain was supposed to be nineteen millions.

On an average of three years, ending March 1799, the export of woollen manufactures, from Great Britain to all parts, was ..£. 8,458,567*
Of which exported to Ireland686,759

On the same average, Ireland exported woollen manufactures, to all parts, in value 10,387
To Great Britain13
Wool to Great Britain92
Woollen and worsted yarn to ditto20,081

* According to Davenant the total exports from England in 1699, was.....£. 6,788,166
Of which the woollen manufactures were£,932,292

As to the quality of Irish wool, it is much decreased in fineness ; but the increased quantity more than compensates. Sir William Petty mentions the fleece to weigh about two pounds, and he supposes that there were then in Ireland four millions of sheep, and this was probably about the time of the act against the importation of Irish cattle. It is said, Ireland produced excellent clothing wool in the last century : but there are only three counties in that kingdom that now furnish any quantity of that kind ; it bears no proportion to the quantity of coarse cloth consumed in Ireland : there must, therefore, be a balance against one of the woollen manufactures of that country.

The Irish fleeces, instead of 2lb. are now double, or near treble that weight. But weight is a fallacious criterion of the fineness of wool : A Spanish fleece of seven pounds weight, is much finer than a South Down fleece of one pound and an half.

In respect to the price of wool being too
E
high,

high, it may be remarked, that notwithstanding this supposed extraordinary value, the number of sheep is said to have decreased in Ireland, and probably would decrease much more if the price should be as low as it was in England. A prohibition of the export of wool and yarn, which was once in contemplation for the sake of lowering the price of wool to assist the manufacturer, would probably diminish the price at first, and diminish the number of sheep; but, in the end, from the depreciation of the price, would rise again in consequence of the decrease of sheep; and, considering the higher price of wool in Ireland than in England at that time, it is probable there was a redundancy of the kind* that went to the latter, and that it was of a sort for which there was not yet a full demand; but whenever the manufacture increases, a demand will stop the exportation.

Until

* The quantity exported was inconsiderable, and on an average it did not, in 1785, exceed in value 1000*l.* yearly; and now, on an average of three years preceding 25th March 1799, it is only 92*l.*

Until the manufacturers are more industrious, and consequently can afford to live better and consume more meat, sheep, when wool is low, will not pay as well as in England, where the price of mutton is much higher, and makes it answer to the farmer to raise sheep when the price of wool would not. But it does not appear that wool is at an unnatural price in Ireland; it is dearer than it was when there was little demand from spinners, and when the low price made it an object to smuggle. It was dearer than the wool of England, of which a monopoly is given to the manufacturers; but comparatively with the wool of other countries, it was cheap.

It appears from the Report of the Committee of the Irish Parliament, appointed 1784 to inquire into the state of the manufactures, that sorted wool is nearly *as dear again* in Ireland as in England, and that there is not such disproportion in the prices of fleece wool. We may infer, that Ireland wants our useful class of woolstaplers, who purchase the wool from the grower, and sort it into different parts to suit
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the several manufactures: the advantage of this is obvious, that the woolstaplers can afford to sell it cheaper, and the wool will be better prepared for the purpose wanted.

The medium price of wool in Ireland from 1703 to 1729 was 6s. 6d. *per* stone of 16lb.; Irish woollen yarn, on a medium of eight years ending 1728, was 10s. 4d. *per* stone; fine wools in Ireland in the year 1743 sold for 16s. *per* stone, the medium price of wool was 12s.; in 1776 the middle price of wool in the fleece had gradually risen to between 17s. 6d. and 18s. 6d. *per* stone, and in 1784 it had as gradually fallen to 11s. 6d. and 12s. 6d.; the present price in Ireland is, as nearly as an average can be given of an article that varies so much in quality, one shilling *per* pound.

These details I fear will be thought minute. But this kind of historical account of the Irish woollen manufacture will perhaps satisfy the reader, better than any other statement, in respect to the past extent and probable extension of that woollen manufacture; and will
best

best shew how little it interfered in reality with the British manufacture, even when it flourished most, and occasioned alarm in this country.

It is curious to observe the injudicious energy of oppression employed by one country to depress and prevent the exportation of the woollen manufacture of the other, and the equally ignorant disposition of Ireland almost constantly during a century to impute her poverty and inability of growing rich to the want of a woollen export trade, while it is evident that since the revolution she has not grown wool enough to clothe her own inhabitants. Her woollen manufacture, however, must have increased very considerably, although not in proportion to her population. She now works up the whole of her wool, which she did not do in the year 1698, when the increase of her manufacture caused that jealousy in England which occasioned the extraordinary prohibition above-mentioned. She that year exported to Great Britain 4,861,278 pounds

pounds of wool and woollen yarn; but her consumption is so much increased, that it appears her importation of woollens from England has doubled, even since the prohibitory law to export woollens has been repealed, and since her manufacture has had all the encouragement (during the last twenty years) which had ever been supposed necessary.

The manufacturers of England can hardly apprehend that the Irish manufacture made of English wool will find its way into this country, as the same protecting duties are, during twenty years, to take place on Irish woollens imported here, as on British woollens imported into Ireland: and as to the suggestion, that English manufacturers, who have correspondencies abroad, will remove to Ireland, and there form great establishments (which could not possibly repay them in the limited time which will elapse before all duties shall cease between the two countries), I answer, that it would be inconsistent with the good sense and prudence of our manufacturers to take such a
step.

step. They will take care to be well informed before they risk their present gains, and will learn how difficult it would be, if they established themselves in Ireland, to vie with the English manufacture abroad. It is known that the advantage of favourable ports and of lower freight is not so great as the possession of a trade, and that a great part of the linen manufacture of Ireland is exported through England. They will recollect, that after many attempts during upwards of a century, after heavy duties laid on British woollens, and extravagant expedients, such as non-importation agreements, the woollen manufacture of Ireland has not flourished beyond a certain degree. Experience has taught Ireland, that, by attention to her linens, that manufacture will be as predominant in Ireland as woollens are in England. She might expend much money in attempts to establish the woollen as a principal manufacture; but it is proved how difficult an operation this is. A considerable manufactory, established not long since in the county of Cork, under every seeming advantage, and of which the greatest hopes

hopes were entertained, has not succeeded : in short, it seems evidently the interest of Ireland not to divert her attention from her staple manufacture, by ruinous endeavours contrary almost to nature, and to imperious circumstances, to aim at raising her woollen manufactures to a rivalry with those of England. Intelligent Englishmen, when they transfer their capitals to Ireland, will soon discover it will be their interest to invest that capital in the unrivalled manufacture of the country, rather than in the desperate speculation of underselling England in the woollen trade.

If then Ireland has a considerable manufacture of woollens and mixtures of wool; and will continue to have it whether wool shall be permitted to go thither from England or not, we cannot suppose that an import of wool from this country will induce her to begin what she has already undertaken with success. In some mixtures of wool she excels, and, I flatter myself, will continue to preserve her superiority; in the fabricks of wool and mohair,

mohair, wool and silk, poplins, tabinets, bombazeens, luterines, and many others, she surpasses all other countries. Her frizes were reckoned the best. There are articles enough in which she may occupy herself, without interfering with, or prejudicing England, and the superiority of the manufactures of the latter country, secured by many advantages, will prevent her from being rivalled in those in which she now excels.

Should Ireland import, at a great expence of carriage, &c. any considerable quantity of our coarse wool, it cannot be admitted she is likely to rival Great Britain at foreign markets, in manufactures made of that wool: I have mentioned the coarse wools of England, because the fine wools of the southern parts are not so necessary to Ireland, whose general consumption is of the coarser fabricks. She is most in want of combing-wool, of which England has great abundance. Ireland has grown, and may grow more of the finer wool. She can raise wool cheaper at home than she

can import from England, although I conceive it will answer better to raise cattle, especially as she may import the Portugueze, and the inferior kinds of Spanish wool, which will answer her purpose, and are cheaper than the fine English wool*. The increase of tillage does not necessarily decrease the number of sheep, because the introduction of turnips, artificial grasses, &c. under an improved agriculture, more than makes amends for the decrease of pasture land. When I examined this subject fifteen years ago, the number of sheep in Ireland seemed to be on the increase. It is probable that fine wool may have decreased there, but coarse wool certainly has increased.

* Ireland has a great trade with Portugal, from whence England has lately received a considerable quantity of wool. She may import wool from thence with as much advantage as England. Portugueze wool has been imported here, to rival the South Down wool, and has been sold at 21d. per pound. It is stated in the evidence, that Portugueze wool sells from 1s. 6d. to 3s. per pound: Ireland has hitherto imported the greater part of the Spanish wool used in her manufacture from England.

increased. She will not supply herself with fine cloths, and surely will never vie with England at the foreign market, in the coarser fabricks, where the raw materials bears a greater proportion to the whole value, than in the finer, if that bulky article is to come from England charged with the expence of carriage, freight, commission, &c. The wool exported from the western ports of Scotland may go to Ireland, if a better price can be had there than at Liverpool.

England undersells all the world in those woollen articles which she now manufactures; in respect to the finer fabricks it is only necessary to observe, that she undersells not only other countries, but Spain herself, even in the manufacture of Spanish wool, for which she pays an high price. She will continue to supply a large quantity of woollens to Ireland, and the supply will increase with the population of that country, which does not, as already observed, raise wool enough to clothe its own inhabitants; neither will it an-
swer

swer to them to employ their rich pastures for that purpose.

Some curious arguments have been used to shew that the carriage of wool from different parts of England to Yorkshire, is as expensive as the carriage of the same would be to Ireland : and those who assert it, illustrate their opinion by stating the expence of carrying wool the extreme distance, namely, from Exeter to Hull, and from thence by inland navigation to Leeds, and then compare and calculate the short distance of Ireland from Exeter, although little wool is sent from thence to the north. The truth is, the quantity of wool of the southern and western parts of England, namely, from Sussex, Somersetshire, &c. which goes to Yorkshire, is not great ; it is principally employed in the finer fabricks of the south-west of England. I have already observed, that the inferior wools of Spain will answer the purpose of the Irish manufacture ; but the fine wools of Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Shropshire, and many other parts of England, will
go,

go, by inland water carriage, at much less expence to Yorkshire than to Ireland : and above all, the coarse and bulky wools of Lincolnshire and Leicestershire, and of the midland and northern parts of England, will go at infinitely less expence to Yorkshire than they can to Ireland.

I must now notice an ungrounded assertion, that the growth of wool in Great Britain is not sufficient to supply the manufacture, and therefore, if suffered to go out of the kingdom, the manufacture must cease in proportion to the quantity exported. Certainly there has been lately a great demand for all kinds of wool; but it does not follow from thence that we do not *usually* grow as much as we want, except the quantity of Spanish used in certain manufactures. It is demonstrable, that we have always had enough, generally more than enough; and it by no means appears that we have not a sufficiency at present, on the contrary it might be shewn that we have plenty, if it were not proved by
the

the late fall in the price. In 1792 there was a greater demand than at present, according to the evidence before the Committee, and as great a cry of scarcity, but it appeared next spring there was a great redundancy of wool on hand.

If it were true that we have not generally sufficient wool for our own use, I should answer, that the increase of wool had been checked by laws which discouraged the growth of it: that the growth of an article always increased with the demand; and that the present price, if steady, would promote more attention, produce a greater quantity, and secure a better quality of wool. But it is obvious that we do not regularly consume the whole of the wool grown in England. And as to the argument, that accumulations of redundancies so highly discouraging to the growth of wool are necessary to the manufacture, I cannot discover in it, either truth, reason, or modesty.

During

During the last thirty years wool has frequently been a mere drug, and even within a few years many farmers have been obliged to keep their wool two or three years, because, in consequence of there not being a demand for it, the price was extremely low. Instead of its progressively rising in value, as has been supposed, the price of the South Down wool has even in the last seven or eight years varied from 45s. to 64s. per tod of 32lbs.; and it is well known, particularly in Lincolnshire and Leicestershire, within the last thirty years, that wool could hardly be sold at any price: It has been even as low as from three to five pounds *per* pack of 240lbs.

It may also be demonstrated, that the growth of wool is greatly increased in England, and even in consequence of inclosures, which erroneously were supposed to diminish the quantity; but the growth of fine or short wool has by no means increased in proportion to that of the coarse or long wool, and perhaps has hardly had any increase except
on

on the Sussex South Downs, and in districts where the sheep of those Downs have been introduced, and a few other places; but I should conceive that the greater profit which arises from the heavy carcase of the long wool sheep, as well as from the weight of wool, may have introduced that breed where short or fine wool was before grown.

The most essential inclosures which have taken place in England were open arable land, particularly in the midland counties of England, where comparatively few sheep were before kept. A large proportion of that land has since been laid down, and now furnishes natural and artificial grasses in abundance, maintaining a great number of sheep, particularly in Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, Warwickshire, and several other counties.— In the case of poor commons or waste lands inclosed, a tenth part of them, when cultivated, will maintain a much larger quantity of sheep than the whole maintained before, and of a good kind. Those kept on commons were in
general

general a bad breed, the wool of which, though commonly reputed fine, was of a much inferior quality to what it was supposed to be: and it is well known that the wool of ill-fed and neglected sheep becomes of a hairy thread, and that the quantity produced is comparatively inconsiderable. Wool grown on a common is always sold lower than pasture wool of an equal quality.

I should observe, that the common notions of coarse and fine wool are very incorrect, especially when those terms are applied as distinctions between combing and clothing wool, in the qualities of both of which kinds there is great difference. The animals that produce them are as distinct as the water-dog and the greyhound in respect to their covering; and the finest down or pasture in the world, although it might diminish the quantity, would not render the coarse long wool of the Lincolnshire or Leicestershire breed short and fine like the South Down wool; nor would the richest pasture render the latter of the

same staple as the Lincolnshire. Rich pasture will increase the weight of the fleece of our short wool sheep : it may lengthen the thread, but it will not give the harsh and hairy quality of our coarse-woolled sheep.

If we may judge from the Custom-house accounts of the import of wool into Ireland, she does not seem to want a large quantity ; for, on an average of the last three years, the whole does not exceed in value more than 5130l. But if an increased demand should raise the price, in this country we know it would encourage and increase the growth; and a small additional price on the wool could not essentially raise the value of the manufacture, as from one pound and one-fourth to two pounds of wool is sufficient to make a yard of cloth. A steady good price for wool would ultimately be highly advantageous to the manufacture, as well as to the country. The quality of our wool has been greatly debased, by the limitation of the price to that which those who have the monopoly may choose to give;

give; the bad principle in question exists in no other instance : and in consequence of laws and prejudices which first took place when we had no good principles of manufacture or commerce*, wool does not bring its intrinsic value; of course there was not proper attention paid to that article; and the coarse or long wool has been

* We must not admit the assertion of the declaimers against the export of wool, that the principle of prohibition existed in our laws from the earliest time; and they mention the good times of Elizabeth, during which long reign no law passed on the subject. They can hardly be so ill-informed as not to know that a duty on the export of wool furnished the principal branch of revenue in this country; that the exportation was first checked in 1337, which lasted a short time; it was permitted to go to certain ports abroad, and a chief object seemed to be to prevent the exportation without paying the King's duty. We find large quantities were exported till 1439, when the exports were restrained to the ports of Calais, Catalonia, and Italy. It continued to be exported in great quantities to the Low Countries till 1630, when its exportation was forbidden; but it was never strictly prohibited till after the Restoration, and still more strictly by the Act of 1696.

been found more profitable, although, from the limitation of the price, and the great abundance of the article, it has been so low as I have described. The average weight of the short wool fleece is little more than 2lb. the weight of long wool is known to have amounted to 30lb. but 10lb. is rather an high average; the quantity, however, much more than makes amends for the quality, independent of the weight of the carcase. It is avowed by the growers of long wool, that, on account of the impossibility of getting a price that will pay them for a fine quality, their whole object is to increase the weight, that being the only principle by which they can gain. The increased price of wool within a few years, although it has not been steady, has encouraged the wool-growers; and lately efforts have been made towards the amelioration of the clothing-wool, and that increased price has produced an examination and a competition which has been beneficial; but while the injudicious limitation of price through the monopoly exists, there can be no depend-

dependence on due encouragement, nor foundation for that speculation which is the parent of improvement.

The first person in these kingdoms has condescended to attend to this subject, and, through his zeal for the public good, the finest woolled sheep of the world have been introduced among us; and it seems to be proved, that as fine wool as we usually procured from Spain, fine enough to answer all our purposes, may be raised in this country. It has been sold here at as high a price as the best Spanish wool; and no complaints were made by the purchasers respecting the quality, although the price of Spanish wool at our market is from 3s. 6d. to 4s. 6d. *per lb.** and it sold last year

* In consequence of his Majesty having imported Spanish sheep, I have been enabled to make several experiments in the breed of Spanish and the best Herefordshire and South Down sheep, and I succeeded in respect to the quality of the wool. I found the wool of the Spanish breed, which had been nineteen years from Spain, and had been two years in my Park in Sussex, retained its quality so well that it appeared as perfect as the ge-

even at 5s. 6d. *per lb.* A large sum might be ultimately saved* which is now paid to foreigners.

nerality of samples I had seen from Spain ; but as I could not get the intrinsic value, not even more than the South Down price, it could not answer to me to sacrifice the carcase, and to prejudice the shape of my flock, by mixing them with any other breed, far less by introducing the entire breed of Spain or of Herefordshire, which, in the estimation of the county, is not so good as the best South Down. Woolstaplers, however, have said, that the wool I shewed them was worth 3s. 6d. *per pound* (I do not mean the wool of the whole flock); but as it was not worth while to make it a principal object, I have never but twice received so much even as 2s. *per pound* for wool. The flock is of the best South Down kind I could breed. I find the wool does not become coarser in a park which is fed close ; on the contrary, it is of a softer and better quality than on the South Downs, the soil of which, being chalk, is supposed to give it a certain harshness. I have during several years worn cloth made of wool grown in my Park, and in respect to appearance it is not distinguishable from cloths made of Spanish wool : but woolstaplers will generally only afford the price they have been used to give for English wool ; therefore it does not answer to a farmer to aim at any other than the fleece of the country.

* The Custom-House value of Spanish wool, at 3s. 6d. *per lb.* imported, on an average of three years ending January 1799, was£.621,423

for wool, and the manufacture supplied at a lower price.

We have been told that the growth of wool in England forty or fifty years ago amounted to 700,000 packs, but now that it does not exceed 600,000*. I am little satisfied with these kinds of calculations; but I must observe, that, in their eagerness to assert a decrease in the growth of British wool, the manufacturers have shewn no great attention to facts, even to those they have stated themselves. They introduced in their evidence an account of cloths milled in the West Riding of Yorkshire; from whence it appears, that forty years ago the quantity of cloth milled, namely,

In

* It is stated in the evidence, that the wool grown in Britain sells for six millions six hundred thousand pounds *per annum*, and is increased by being worked up into manufacture, some sorts rather more than double, some nine times or even more, and the average increase above three times; that the manufacture, then, sells for 19,800,000*l.*; that four-tenths of it is exported, and six-tenths consumed at home.

<i>Broads.</i>	<i>Narrows.</i>
In 1760 was ..49,362 pieces	..69,573 pieces
In 1799272,755	180,168

nearly sixfold increase in the broads, and nearly threefold increase in the narrows. Or, on an average of three years following the last peace, and ending 1786, the number of pieces milled were,

<i>Broads.</i>		<i>Narrows.</i>	
<i>Pieces.</i>	<i>Yards.</i>	<i>Pieces.</i>	<i>Yards.</i>
151,363	..4,624,721	118,187	..3,434,238;
and the average of three years ending 1799, inclusive,			
242,068	..7,725,280	161,814	..5,687,079

The increase is 74,039 pieces, or 3,100,559 yards, of broads; and 43,627 pieces, or 2,252,841 yards, of narrows: which increase, in fourteen years, is considerably more than the whole quantity milled in 1760.

This increase is calculated only on that kind of the manufacture made of clothing wool which goes to the fulling-mill in the West Riding of Yorkshire; and it does not appear that manu-

manufactures of the same kind of clothing-wool have materially declined in other parts of England since 1786. It is supposed the manufactures of combing-wool have increased in quantity, although not in value, nearly in the same proportion as those of the clothing-wool. Mr. William Hustler, in his evidence, states the increase in value of the woollen manufacture of England, in the short period of nine years, to be 5,000,000*l.*; that is, in 1782 it was estimated at 14,000,000*l.* and in 1791 at 19,000,000*l.*

I must now ask, if there had not been a great increase in the growth of British wool, with what materials could there have been such an extraordinary increase of the manufacture within forty years, namely, since 1760? The import of wool then was 1,158,840 *lbs.*

On an average of three years

ending 1786* 2,097,521

On

* Woollens exported from Great Britain in 1786 £.3,512,847
Of which was exported from Scotland 83,041

On an average of three years
ending 1799 3,995,887 *lbs.**

Much the greater part of this wool, which was mostly imported from Spain† or Portugal, is employed in the woollen manufactures of the West of England, which, during the last twelve or fourteen years, seem to have revived through the introduction of machinery, the use of which, however, in consequence of the clamours of the manufacturers, is not so complete there, as in Yorkshire. A considerable part of the increased importation of Spanish wool is employed in Kerseymeyres and in other fine woollen goods, and in mixtures of wool, silk, and other articles, the manufacture of which has been established since the year 1760. The quantity is not comparatively great

which

* On same average Spanish wool was re-exported in
value £.15,582

† On an average of three years ending 1799, the *lbs.*
quantity of wool imported from Spain was.... 3,952,193
From elsewhere 43,694

3,995,887

which is employed in making those kinds of cloth which undergo the operation of the fulling-mill in the West Riding of Yorkshire, and consequently did not go far towards the sixfold and threefold increase of those cloths, as above stated.

Great apprehensions are expressed that wool, if allowed to go to Ireland, would be smuggled through that country to foreign parts; and the old story is revived, that the French cannot work up their wools without a considerable quantity of English. I have within a few years seen some of the principal manufactories of Normandy, Luxemburgh, Limburgh, and other countries, and I am perfectly satisfied that good cloth is made in those places without any mixture of English wool, and that inferior Spanish and other wool may be purchased cheaper than English fine wool may be had there, charged with the heavy expences and risk which must attend smuggling. If it can answer to smuggle wool to foreign countries, it must be the soft long combing-wool, the bulk of
which

which will add to the difficulty. It is known that wool is not now smuggled from Ireland; the home market, since the prohibitions have been taken off, has been so high, that no foreign market can afford to pay the additional expence of smuggling, which has been computed at 6d. *per* pound. And it is generally understood, that when wool is above 10s. *per* stone in that country, it will not answer to smuggle it. I observe the present Irish Custom-house valuation of wool on export is 10s. 6d. *per* stone. It is difficult to give an average value of an article which varies so much in quality and price; but I have already mentioned, one shilling *per* pound may be considered as nearly the average.

The scarcity produced by an extraordinary demand of wool is construed by the manufacturers into a decrease in the growth of that article, and they suppose the killing of sheep under two or three years old has reduced the number; which is by no means the case: the land must be stocked, and the quantity of
 wool

wool must be the same. The increased price of sheep, and the demand for the South Down breed, have induced some farmers to change from a wedder flock to a breeding flock: if there were any decrease from the circumstance alluded to, the improvements in agriculture, and a more general introduction of turnips, rape, and artificial grasses, have enabled the farmers to increase their stock of sheep so considerably that there can be no doubt, on the whole, it much more than makes up for the supposed decrease by killing sheep under two or three years old.

The manufacturers have expressed in their evidence great tenderness for the landed interest on the subject of the poor rates. I wish to consider the landed and commercial interest as the same; but I know that the rental of England, partially raised in some districts by the establishment of manufactures, would be nearly one-third greater than it is if not kept down by an enormous poor-tax, which almost entirely falls on the land, a very small part being paid

paid by the trading part of the community, as personal property, though liable according to law, is not rated to the poor. But it is hardly fair to quote the poor-rate at a time of the greatest scarcity ever known. The failure of manufactories has certainly raised that rate in some places; but it can only be supposed to have that effect for a limited time, until the families in distress shall have occupied themselves in some other business.

The case of Bocking in Essex, in particular, has been mentioned. It was not merely the neglect of machinery that occasioned the removal of the manufactures of that place, but the expence of fuel and of other articles. It is well known that manufactures remove from places where there is a scarcity of fuel, and settle in districts where it is plentiful. The woollen manufacture was first established in London and its neighbourhood*; but it long since

* It moved into Surry, Kent, Essex, Berkshire, Oxfordshire,

since moved to the West and to the North, where there was generally the greatest abundance of coals. The cheapness of fuel, however important, is not always absolutely necessary, as the difference in the price is sometimes more than compensated by other advantages; and there are thriving manufactures of wool in England, where coal is not comparatively cheap, and even where there is no coal.

I have

&c. and afterwards to Worcestershire, Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, Somerset, Dorset, and Yorkshire.

In 1331, Edward III. encouraged seventy Flemish families to settle here, who taught the English to make and dress fine woollen cloths; before which time the manufacture was in a rude state. About 1337 restrictive laws in the manufacturing towns of Flanders, and great tumults, induced many of the people to take shelter in England. In 1567 the persecutions and wars in the Low Countries drove great numbers hither, who first introduced the manufacture of bayes and other slight woollen goods (then called New Drapery) at Canterbury, Sandwich, Maidstone, Colchester, Norwich, Southampton, &c. The manufacture of fine woollen cloth was not established in France till 1646.

I have much pleasure in observing that there are no petitions on the part of other manufacturers. I believe indeed they have little or nothing to apprehend; and I also believe, that their patriotic attention to the general welfare of the Empire prevents them from bringing forward any selfish narrow objections. The good sense of the country sees that the measure of Union is necessary, in which light I have always considered it; and I shall be happy indeed when the arrangements shall be completed, by removing all distinctions between the two countries, and every idea of separate and jarring interests. This will not be the case until all customs, duties, drawbacks and bounties shall cease, and the two islands shall be on the same footing as two counties in England. The great object to be obtained is a free intercourse; that liberal principle is the basis of the Union between the two countries; yet it requires time, though of no great length, for a measure of such importance, and is impracticable perhaps during a war.

I trust

I trust that that it will appear from what has been observed, that the woollen manufacturers of Great Britain should not be alarmed by the expectations of Ireland, nor by any temporary advantage Ireland can derive from importing large quantities of wool, even if she can afford it, before the commercial arrangements between the countries can be completed; and however we may doubt as to permitting a general export to all parts, there can be little ground to object to the limited quantity that could be exported to Ireland, at a time when a redundancy may happen to lower the value beyond what is reasonable. There is no ground to apprehend that the export of the quantity of that kind of wool which she wants, and can afford to take, will be so considerable as to affect the British manufacture. I have already observed, that a great demand would raise the value beyond *her* price; at the same time there would be an harmless and small concession in respect to a monopoly that now exists against the wool-grower and the consumer, which would help to remove well-grounded complaint,

and a tendency to consider the landed and commercial part of the community as having separate or opposite interests. A free trade in wool to Ireland might prevent the price from falling so low as eventually to debase the article; yet I do not believe it would raise the price higher than it is *at present*, which is perhaps sufficient, though not too much, to engage that attention which will bring it to perfection. Politically considered, the advantage to the Empire is the same wherever a manufacture succeeds, and the woollen manufacturers of the South of England might as reasonably petition that the fine wools of those parts of the kingdom should not go to the manufacturers of the North, as the latter now petition that wool should not be sent to Ireland when she becomes a part of this country. The greater part of the cotton wool used in Ireland goes through England. The cotton manufacturers of this country might as justly object to its being permitted to pass from hence to Ireland. However that permission has not hurt our cotton works.

works. Ireland has the cotton charged with extra expence, as she would have British wool. I trust it also appears that the growth of wool in Great Britain has increased, and is fully sufficient to supply the manufactures; and that the apprehensions are perfectly groundless, that great quantities of British wool will, under all the circumstances, be conveyed to foreign parts through Ireland, charged with expences that would double the price. On the whole, I assert that Ireland will be benefited, and Great Britain not prejudiced. On the contrary, their manufactures and commerce will derive great advantage from a free intercourse and the increasing wealth of Ireland.

Some persons seem not to be sensible of the great ascendancy of our manufactures, and to suppose that the woollen trade depends principally on having wool at a price unreasonably low. But that paramount manufacture most surely cannot be overset by the temporary indulgence in question: We are in this instance
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embarrassed by the intention to repeal a prohibition which never should have taken place ; but these difficulties would not have occurred, if there had been no alteration in the commercial intercourse between the two countries, until the arrangement could have been completed, by the removal of all duties between them. The manufacturers of the North very liberally acknowledge, that although they might suffer some partial prejudice, they could not have objected, if the trade between Great Britain and Ireland were, as it is intended to be, perfectly free, and on the same footing as between England and Scotland. Ireland possibly would not have been satisfied ; but she could not *reasonably* have objected to its remaining so, as almost the whole of the exports from Ireland to England are entered duty free, and the principal exports from England to Ireland are liable in entry to a duty of ten *per cent.* on the value. The mode proposed by the resolutions is a suspension of a part of the measure. If the commercial intercourse had remained as it is,

is, until all duties could be removed, it would also have been only a suspension: It would have been more simple, and all the intricacy of the system of drawbacks equal to counter-vailing duties payable on import, the accounts of duties and charges, &c. would have been avoided. But whether this was practicable or not, I cannot say: it seems not to be of great consequence for the time in question, and I cannot discover any mischief likely to arise from the resolutions as they now stand.

I have on a former occasion given my opinion on the principle and the necessity of this great measure of Union: The longer I reflect, the more I am convinced of the commercial and other advantages which will be derived from it. As an Irishman, I am highly gratified by the liberality of giving the turn of the scale, in almost every instance, to the weaker country, which was more necessary than perhaps appears to those who have not attentively considered the state of the manufactures in that kingdom:

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as an Englishman, I am satisfied with that part of the arrangement relative to which I confess I was most anxious, and which appeared to me the most difficult, namely, the mode of settling the representation in Ireland. My difficulties on that head are removed by the strict attention that has been paid to every circumstance that could preserve the independence of Parliament. Sixty-four of the hundred members are to be sent from counties, and the remainder from the University, the Cities, and principal Towns; and the Peers are to be elected for life.

Some clouds which in the early stages of this measure threatened its success, have disappeared. It now draws towards a conclusion with so happy a prospect, that I feel relieved from great anxiety. When the arrangement shall be completed, I shall enjoy more satisfaction from it than I have ever done on any other public occasion; and while some triumph in our splendid victories, and in those of our allies, I shall consider this great event with
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abundantly more satisfaction than I could
any conquest, however brilliant, achieved
even against our most inveterate foes.

FINIS.

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WILD COURT, LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS.

abundantly more than I could
any other, and I have
even signed one of them.



THIRTY

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WILSON COURT, NEW YORK, N. Y.

APPENDIX.

I HAVE great pleasure in being permitted to add to these Observations, the following satisfactory and interesting proof, that Wool, as fine and as valuable as that imported from Spain, may be grown in this Island.

A Project for extending the BREED OF FINE-WOOLED SPANISH SHEEP, now in the Possession of HIS MAJESTY, into all Parts of Great Britain, where the Growth of fine Clothing Wools is found to be profitable.

AFTER experiments had been tried, for several years, by the King's command, with Spa-

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nish sheep of the true Merino breed, imported from various parts of Spain—all of which concurred in proving, that the valuable wool of those animals did not degenerate in any degree in this climate, and that the cross of a Merino ram uniformly increased the quantity and meliorated the quality of the wool of every kind of short-wooled sheep on which it was tried, and more particularly so in the case of the South Down, Hereford, and Devonshire breeds—His Majesty was pleased to command, that some Merino sheep should be procured from a flock, the character of which for a fine pile of wool was well established.

Application was accordingly made to Lord Auckland, who had lately returned from an embassy to Spain; and in consequence of his Lordship's letters, the Marchioness del Campo di Alange was induced to present to His Majesty five rams and thirty-five ewes from her own flock, known by the name of *Negretti*, the reputation of which, for purity of blood and fineness of wool, is as high as any in Spain.

For

For this present, his Majesty was pleased to send to the Marchioness, in return, eight fine English coach-horses.

These sheep, which were imported in the year 1792, have formed the basis of a flock now kept in the Park of his Royal Highness the Duke of York at Oatlands, the breed of which has been preserved with the utmost care and attention.

The wool of this flock, as well as that of the sheep procured before from Spain, was acknowledged, by the manufacturers who saw it, to be, to all appearance, of the very first quality; yet none of them chose to offer a price for it at all equal to what they themselves gave for good Spanish wool, lest, as they said, it should not prove in manufacture so valuable as its appearance promised. It became necessary, therefore, that it should be manufactured at the King's expence, in order that absolute proof might be given of its actual fitness for
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the fabric of superfine broad cloth; and this was done, year after year, in various manners—the cloth always proving excellent: yet the persons to whom the wool was offered for sale, still continued to undervalue it—being prepossessed with an opinion, that though it might not at first degenerate, it certainly, sooner or later, would alter its quality, much for the worse.

In 1796, it was resolved to sell the wool at the price that should be offered for it, in order that the manufacturers themselves might make trial of its quality, although a price equal to its real value should not be obtained. Accordingly the clip of that year was sold for 2s. a pound, and the clip of the year 1797 for 2s. 2d.

The value of the wool being now in some degree known, the clip of 1798 was washed in the Spanish manner; and it sold as follows:

The

The number of fleeces of ewes and wedders
was 89 ;

Which produced in wool washed on the sheep's
backs295 *lb.*

Loss in scowering92

Amount of scowered wool203

Which produced,

Raffinos, ..167 <i>lb.</i> ..at 5s. <i>per lb.</i>	}	<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
Finos,23at 3s. 6d.		47	8	0
Terceros, ..13at 2s. 6d.				

The clip of 1799 was managed in the same
manner, and produced as follows :

The number of fleeces of ewes and wedders
was 101 ;

Which produced in wool washed on the sheep's
backs346 *lb.*

Loss in scowering92

Amount of scowered wool254

Which produced,

Raffinos, ..207 <i>lb.</i> at 5s. 6d. <i>per lb.</i>	}	<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
Finos,28 ..at 3s. 6d.		63	14	6
Terceros, ..19 ..at 2s.				

The

The rams wool of the two years, sorted together, produced as follows :

Quantity of wool washed on the sheep's
backs 314 *lb.*
Loss in scowering 99
Amount of scowered wool 215

Which produced,

Raffinos, .. 181 <i>lb.</i> at 4s. 6d. <i>per lb.</i>	} <i>l. s. d.</i>
Finos, 22 .. at 3s. 6d.	
Terceros, (.. 12 .. at 2s.	
	} 45 15 6

It is necessary to account for these extraordinary prices, by stating, that in the year 1799, when both sales were effected, Spanish wool was dearer than it ever before was known to be ; but it is also proper to add, that 5s. 6d. was then the price of the best Spanish piles ; and that none were sold higher, except, as is said, a very small quantity for 5s. 9d.

The King has been pleased to give away, to different persons who undertook to try experiments by crossing other breeds of sheep with the Spanish, more than one hundred rams
and

and some ewes. In order, however, to make the benefit of this valuable improvement in the staple commodity of Great Britain, accessible to all persons who may choose to take the advantage of it, his Majesty is this year pleased to permit some rams and ewes to be sold ; and also to command, that reasonable prices shall be put upon them, according to the comparative value of each individual. In obedience to which it has been suggested, that five guineas may be considered as the medium price of a ram, and two guineas that of a ewe—a sum which, it is believed, the purchaser will in all cases be able to receive back with large profit, by the improvement his flock will derive from the valuable addition it will obtain.

Though the mutton of the Spanish sheep was always excellent, their carcasses were extremely different in shape from that mould which the fashion of the present day teaches us to prefer. Great improvement has, however, been already made in this article, by a careful and attentive selection of such rams
and

and ewes as appeared most likely to produce a comely progeny; and no doubt can be entertained that in due time, with judicious management, carcasses covered with superfine Spanish wool may be brought into any shape, whatever it may be, to which the interest of the butcher, or the caprice of the breeder, may choose to affix a particular value.

Sir Joseph Banks, who has the honour of being intrusted with the management of this business, will answer all letters on the subject of it, addressed to him in Soho-square. The rams will be delivered at Windsor; the ewes, at Weybridge in Surrey, near Oatlands.

As those who have the care of his Majesty's Spanish flock, may naturally be supposed partial to the project of introducing superfine wool into these kingdoms, it has been thought proper to annex the following Notice, in order to shew the opinion held of a similar undertaking in a neighbouring country, where individuals, however they have mistaken their political interest,

terest, are rather remarkable for pursuing and thoroughly weighing their own personal advantage in all their private undertakings, and for sagacity in seizing all opportunities of improving, by public establishments, the resources of their nation.

FRENCH ADVERTISEMENT.

On the 24th of May last, an advertisement appeared in the *Moniteur*, giving notice of a sale of 220 ewes and rams of the finest woolled Spanish breed, part of the flock kept on the national farm of Rambouillet; also 2000lb. of superfine wool, being the present year's clip of this national flock; and 1300lb. of wool, the produce of the mixed breeds of sheep kept at the menagerie at Versailles.

This advertisement, which is official, is accompanied by a Notice from Lucien Bonaparte, minister of the interior, as follows:

“ The Spanish breed of sheep that produce the finest wool, introduced into France thirty

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years

years ago, has not manifested the smallest symptom of degeneration. Samples of the wool of this valuable flock, which was brought from Spain in the year 1786, are still preserved, and bear testimony that it has not in the least declined from its original excellence; although the district where these sheep have been kept is not of the best quality for sheep farming. The draughts from this flock, that have been annually sold by auction, have always exceeded in value the expectation of the purchasers, in every country to which they have been carried, that is not too damp for sheep.

“ The weight of their fleeces is from six* to twelve pounds each, and those of the rams are sometimes heavier.

“ Sheep of the ordinary °coarse-wooled breeds, when crossed by a Spanish ram, produce

* This must mean fleeces unwashed, or in the yoke, as it is technically termed.

duce fleeces double in weight, and far more valuable than those of their dams; and if this cross is carefully continued by supplying rams of the pure Spanish blood, the wool of the third or the fourth generation is scarce distinguishable from the original Spanish wool.

“ These mixed breeds are more easily maintained, and can be fattened at as small an expence as the ordinary breeds of the country.

“ No speculation whatever offers advantages so certain, and so considerable to those who embark in it, as that of the improvement of wool, by the introduction of rams and ewes of the true Spanish race among the flocks of France, whether the sheep are purchased at Rambouillet, or elsewhere. In this business, however, it is of the greatest importance to secure the Spanish breed unmixed, and the utmost precaution on that head should be used, as the avarice of proprietors may tempt them to substitute the crossed breeds instead of
the

the pure one, to the great disappointment of the purchaser.

“The amelioration of wool at Rambouillet has made so great a progress, that in a circle from 24 to 36 miles in diameter, the manufacturers purchase 35,000 pounds of wool improved by two, three, or four crosses. Those who wish to accelerate the amelioration of their flocks by introducing into them ewes of this improved sort, may find abundance to be purchased in that neighbourhood at reasonable rates.



FINIS.

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